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Chairman
4th District, Oklahoma

*House Meets at 12:30 p.m. for Morning Hour and
2:00 p.m. for Legislative Business
(No Votes Before 6:00 p.m.)*

Anticipated Floor Action:

S. 380—Congressional Award Reauthorization Act
H.R. 2112—Multidistrict, Multiparty, Multiform Jurisdiction Act
**H.Con.Res. 184—Sense of Congress on the Importance of Family Friendly
Television Programming**
H.R. 658—Thomas Cole National Historic Site Act
H.R. 940—Lackawanna Valley Heritage Area Act
H.R. 1651—Fisherman's Protective Act Amendments
H.R. 2368—Bikini Resettlement and Relocation Act
H.R. 898—Spanish Peaks Wilderness Act
**H.R. 1619—Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage
Corridor Reauthorization Act**



Bills Considered Under Suspension of the Rules

Floor Situation: The House will consider the following nine bills under suspension of the rules as its first order of business today. Each is debatable for 40 minutes, may not be amended, and requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

S. 380—Congressional Award Reauthorization Act reauthorizes the 1979 Congressional Award Act (P.L. 96-114) through October 1, 2004. The 1979 law established the Congressional Award Foundation, which bestows the Congressional Award on youth who achieve goals in areas such as public service and physical fitness. Upon completing their goals, the youth are presented with either a bronze, silver, or gold medal based on their age group. Last year, over 1,000 children entered into the non-competitive program and approximately 400 youth finished the program and received awards. In addition, the measure changes

the annual reporting date required of the foundation's board of directors from April 1 to June 1, so as not to preempt the Comptroller General's audit report on the foundation, which is not completed until May 15 each year. Finally, the bill makes minor changes to the membership requirements for board members. The bill was referred to the House on April 14 and was not considered by a House committee.

H.R. 2112—Multidistrict, Multiparty, Multiform Jurisdiction Act amends the federal judicial code to remove impediments to consolidating certain lawsuits within the federal court system. Specifically, the measure permits federal judges, before whom pretrial proceedings for multidistrict litigation were consolidated, to consolidate them for trial. Current law allows judges to consolidate only pre-trial proceedings in multidistrict litigation. In addition, the bill grants federal district courts original jurisdiction over civil actions arising out of an accident involving the death or injury of 25 or more individuals if the damages sought are more than \$50,000 per person. Current law does not permit such cases to be filed in federal court or, if filed in state court, to be transferred to federal court. The bill was introduced by Mr. Sensenbrenner and was reported by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote on July 27.

H.Con.Res. 184—Sense of Congress on the Importance of Family Friendly Programming on Television recognizes and honors the efforts of the Family Friendly Programming Forum and other groups that support family friendly programming and their efforts to encourage television networks, studios, and the production community to produce more quality programs. The measure supports the proposed Family Friendly Programming Awards, development fund, and scholarships, all of which are designed to encourage, recognize, and celebrate creative excellence in, and commitment to, family programming. Finally, the measure encourages the media and American advertisers to further a family friendly television environment within which appropriate advertisements can accompany the programming. The bill was introduced by Mr. Portman and was not considered by a House committee.

H.R. 658—Thomas Cole National Historic Site Act authorizes the Interior Secretary to establish the Thomas Cole National Historic Site in Catskill, New York, as part of the National Park System, and enter into cooperative agreements with state, local, and private organizations for this purpose. The proposed site includes the 3.4 acres that encompasses the Thomas Cole residence. The bill allows the Greene County Historical Society to continue to own and operate the site within the guidelines set by the National Park Service. The bill requires the Greene County Historical Society to develop a management plan with the assistance of the Interior Secretary within two years of enactment. The bill was introduced by Mr. Sweeney and was reported by the Resources Committee by voice vote on April 28.

H.R. 940—Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area Act establishes the Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area and (pending execution of an agreement with a local authority) the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area in Pennsylvania. The bill directs the National Park Service (NPS) to execute agreements with two local associations (the Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority and the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area) that will serve as management entities for the new areas. These two entities will develop management plans for the heritage areas, which will include an inventory of resources and recommendations for financing, managing, and protecting each area and its resources. The NPS may provide technical and financial assistance to the management entities and must approve or disapprove the management plans. The NPS's authority for assisting the management entities expires after September 30, 2012. Finally, the bill authorizes \$1 million annually for each heritage area, but caps the total authorization for each area at \$10 million. Finally, the bill requires a 50 percent non-federal match for all grants provided under the bill. The measure was introduced by Mr. Sherwood and was reported by the Resources Committee by voice vote on July 21.

H.R. 1651—Fishermen’s Protective Act Amendments amends the 1967 Fisherman’s Protective Act (FPA) to extend from 2000 to 2003 the period during which reimbursement may be provided to owners of United States fishing vessels for costs incurred when the vessel is seized and detained by a foreign country. The FPA established a voluntary insurance program to compensate fishermen who suffer lost income through these illegal seizures. Under this program, known as the Fishermen’s Guaranty Fund, the Secretary of State collects fees from the owners of U.S. commercial fishing vessels to cover administrative costs, along with a portion of the reimbursements. This fund covers economic losses incurred by fishermen while their vessels are seized including damages to the vessel, the market value of lost fish, fishing gear, dockage fees, and fifty percent of gross income lost. Since 1987, only one claim has been filed against the Fisherman’s Guaranty Fund. In 1996, four vessel owners were reimbursed a total of \$186,000 for a seizure made by the Costa Rican Government in 1992. The bill was introduced by Mr. Young (AK) *et al.* and was reported by the Resources Committee by voice vote on June 23.

H.R. 2368—Bikini Resettlement and Relocation Act amends the terms of the Resettlement Trust Fund for the people of Bikini Atoll to authorize a one-time distribution to the people of Bikini in order to recognize the hardships they suffered. The bill limits the amount of the distribution to the greater of three percent of the fund’s market value or an amount that exceeds the fund’s principal. The federal government established the trust fund in 1982 to assist in relocating and resettling the people of the Bikini Atoll, who were moved off their islands by the United States to facilitate the government’s nuclear weapons testing in the 1940s and 50s. The bill was introduced by Mr. Young (AK) *et al.* and was reported by the Resources Committee by voice vote on June 27.

H.R. 898—Spanish Peaks Wilderness Act amends the 1993 Colorado Wilderness Act (*P.L. 103-77*) to add approximately 18,000 acres of the San Isabel National Forest and to designate these lands as the Spanish Peaks Wilderness. Furthermore, the bill addresses local concerns regarding the adjustment of boundaries to exclude certain lands that are likely to have the capacity for mineral production and exclude a road that locals use for access to the area. The bill was introduced by Mr. McInnis and was reported by the Resources Committee by voice vote on May 5.

H.R. 1619—Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor Reauthorization Act expands the boundaries of the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor to include an additional town in Connecticut and nine towns in Massachusetts (the corridor is currently exists only within the state of Connecticut). The bill transfers the authority to oversee the corridor from the Governor of Connecticut to the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation. The bill directs the Interior Secretary to enter into a compact with the corporation to manage the corridor and allows the non-profit to distribute federal funds provided under the bill (in consultation with the governors of Connecticut and Massachusetts). In addition, the measure (1) increases the amount authorized to manage the corridor to \$1 million annually (from \$250,000); and (2) stipulates that not more than \$10 million may be appropriated for the corridor after the enactment of the bill. Finally, the bill requires a 50 percent non-federal match for all grants provided under the bill. The bill was introduced by Mr. Gejdenson and was reported by the Resources Committee by a vote of 22-5 on August 4.

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, #25, September 10, 1999.

